

The Republican.

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TO THE REPUBLICANS OF THE ISLAND OF GREAT BRITAIN.

Dorchester Gaol, July 16,

CITIZENS,

Year 3, of the Spanish Revolution.

YOU must excuse my neglecting you this week, and further excuse my squabbles with those who are intriguing to arrest our progress and to withdraw all support from our principles from pure fear of being obliged to abandon their own and follow us.

I hope, confidently hope, to announce to you within a week or two the fall of the Spanish Despot and the rise of the Spanish Republic; after which I shall not fail to read the Christian Reformers of this country some becoming lectures.

R. CARLILE.

DEFEAT OF THE VICE SOCIETY.

THOUGH the prosecutions of the Vice Society for the last three years, in cases of alleged blasphemy, have actually proved so many defeats to them, and the hypocrites they represent, still it has been reserved for Mr. Benbow to enjoy the triumph of the first verdict of NOT GUILTY in a case of their prosecution. I sincerely congratulate Mr. Benbow and the Public on this issue, particularly, as I felt considerable pain and disappointment in hearing that a man, who has been notoriously identified with the question of Reform in its fullest extent, should have become subject to an indictment for the publication of obscene prints and libels. At the time I first heard of it, I could not help expressing my disgust at finding such publications sold from the same shop with the works of Thomas Paine; because I knew

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that it would, above every thing, gratify these Virtue suppressing hypocrites, to have an identification of those works in the same shop, and sold by a man who has been a great sufferer, to say the least of him, in the cause of Reform. Had a verdict of Guilty been given against Mr. Benbow, and we all know from the mode of constructing Juries, that the issue of a prosecution of this kind is all chance work, (had Humphrey Boyle been tried by the Jury of a former session, he would have been acquitted, this we know!!!) we should have found every corrupt newspaper and periodical publication, teeming with paragraphs upon the projects of the Reformers to sap the morals of the people by putting forth such publications, as a proof of which the verdict against Mr. Benbow would have been held up to public view. This verdict then forms a double defeat of the motives of the Vice Society, and so far is of the greatest public importance. Like the Constitutional Association, that Society must be put down. It has outraged public morals by making itself the censor of matters of opinion, and whatever good it may have done by an actual prosecution for, or a lessening of, real obscenity, it has so far defeated its own alleged purposes, by upholding the same thing in another shape, and by persecuting those who were really acting upon their professed principles, in putting down the vices of idolatry, and the obscenity of the Jew Books, or the books called the Bible.

The Vice Society must and shall be put down. The defence made by Mrs. Wright in the Court of King's Bench has given it another terrible blow, and I hereby promise the Members of the Vice Society, that within another month or two, I will find as many men as they like to prosecute, who shall openly sell the whole of the Works of Thomas Paine, and every publication of mine that they have hitherto prosecuted. I pledge myself to make that Society desist from prosecuting matters of opinion, and when I have done that I shall have put it down; for the prosecution for obscenity is but a secondary object, and a mere cloak and excuse for their existence to prosecute what is called *blasphemy*, the definition of which word they have made so familiar to the public, that it begins to be cherished as a synonyme of virtue and truth.

The Public Papers say, the Constitutional Association is actually defunct: that Dr. Stoddart, Dr. Sewell, Dr. Murray, Dr. Clarke, Dr. Sharpe, Dr. Orton, Dr. Purton, and Dr. Rignall, have doctored it to death, and squandered the

thirty thousand pounds that the whores and rogues of the country contributed to its support, so as not to leave enough in the Banker's hands to cover a check for £2. 9s.! That Association never alarmed me for a moment, but gave me new spirit for perseverance, and I feel entitled to a large share of praise for the victory over them, though I expect nothing in the shape of prize money, as the crew is not only beggarly, but reduced to actual beggary! Since the exposure of Rignall, the Informer, by Mr. Cooper, on the trial of my sister, our virtuous ministers have given him a pension of seventy pounds a year, by way of making him look a more respectable character as an agent for these Prosecuting Associations: but so notoriously infamous is this man's character, that had we dreamt of his being the person who was to swear against Mrs. Wright, we should certainly have given him a complete exposure. He is a complete Italian in nature, a villain that will swear to any thing for pay. Mrs. Wright always understood that young Orton was the fellow who was to swear to her publications, or we could have brought forward respectable evidence that he was discharged from the Custom House for perjury, and so discharged after thirty years service without a pension, until the Bible Gentry in the Treasury, Liverpool and Vansittart, have discovered that he has expiated his crimes by selling himself to all the purposes of the Vice Society and Constitutional Association. I shall soon expect to hear that the managers of the Constitutional Association are put upon the Pension List, as a reward for their services in spending thirty thousand pounds against the advocates of Reform!

Thirty thousand pounds! What has this Association done? Why it appears they have put five of my agents in prison for selling four sixpenny and one twopenny pamphlet, and this at an actual expence of six thousand pounds a man for them! Glorious work to suppress sedition and blasphemy, which is now running in a current ten times as strong as when they began to annihilate it. GLORY TO THE OMNIPOTENT PRESS! I tell Jehovah to his face that I will worship no other God but the Printing Press! To that great power I will offer my matins and my vespers, and live alone for its glory, and to exhibit its powers omnipotent! This my example I recommend to the Christian Reformers of Leeds, as we know and feel something about the glory of the Printing Press, but what the glory of their idol God is, they cannot say, nor do I know.

At the foot of this article, I publish the best report of the

trial of Mr. Benbow that I can gather from the Papers. My readers will understand that "The Rambler's Magazine," is a work that has no connection with the principles of Reform in any shape. It does not profess any thing of the kind; and it is by no means a credit to us that such a work should emanate from a publisher who is in other respects an avowed publisher of Reform publications. It professes to be a collection of amatory cases that have been hitherto tried in our Courts of Law, or that may arise in the course of its publication; with all such matters as are calculated to incite public curiosity by their wantonness or excess. Such publications are evidently mischievous to public morals; for instead of shaming or allaying vicious passions, it is notorious and natural that they are incentives to such passions, and often used as schemes for seduction: as such I condemn them, and regret that they should emanate from the same shop and publisher with the works of Paine and Lawrence.

It will be seen that the advocate of Mr. Benbow, Mr. Charles Phillips, who but three years ago was the eulogist of that very Society and its measures, has detected the Committee in the publication of a lie. The Society professes in its public reports, to admonish before it prosecutes; but it was confessed that no such thing had been done in Mr. Benbow's case. I further declare that in all the prosecutions that have come from that Association upon me, my family, and agents, I have never received or heard of any thing in the shape of admonition, but we have received every species of malignity that they could bestow upon us. However, I rejoice in the assurance that I can put it down.

R. CARLILE.

Dorchester Gaol, July 15, 1822.

MIDDLESEX SESSIONS, THURSDAY, JULY 11.

TRIAL OF MR. BENBOW.

William Benbow was indicted for publishing certain obscene libels. The indictment contained 12 counts, 10 of which contained extracts from a Magazine and Novel published by the defendant, and the other two described prints contained in those works.

Mr. ADOLPHUS stated the case for the prosecution. He said the prosecution was instituted by the Society for the suppression of Vice against the defendant, not for one, but for a persevering publication of libels. In the beginning of the present year, the defendant, who had kept a large shop in the Strand, removed to Castle Street,

Leicester-square, where he commenced the publication of a periodical work, called "The Rambler's Magazine;" passages from which formed some of the counts in the indictment. In the fourth number of the Magazine he announced to his readers that he was about to publish a French Novel, which was out of print, without curtailment, in two pocket volumes, at the low price of 6d. a number, and gave a specimen of the work. This work, as they would feel when they heard the indictment read, contained passages most inflammatory to the passions of youth.

James Rignall purchased the several numbers of the magazine and novel produced to him, from the defendant. They were sold, some at 6d. and some at 8d. each.

Cross-examined.—He was employed by the Society for the suppression of Vice. He frequently bought books to prove afterwards upon trials. He went to many shops, wherever he was ordered, but never went to a circulating library in Bond-Street. Catalogues of some of the principal circulating libraries, which we presume contained the novel in question, were handed to the witness, but he declared he knew nothing of them. He was never sent to Mr. Murray's to buy any book. He had been three years in the employment, and had been thirty years in the Customs.—He did not know why he was discharged; the Lords of the Treasury thought his case a hard one, and allowed him a pension.

The indictment was here read, and the libels charged compared with the passages in the books proved by the witness; one of the libels was a song. The reading of the libels, which occupied an hour, being ended,

Mr. C. PHILLIPS addressed the jury for the defendant. He began by observing, that the defendant had received a written notice from the secretary, that his trial would not take place till Friday. And at eight o'clock last night he received notice that his trial must come on to-day, which left his advocate wholly unprepared.

Mr. ADOLPHUS examined Mr. Pritchard, the Secretary of the Society, who confirmed Mr. Phillip's statement, and on his cross-examination said the Society had not given the defendant any admonition or notice of their intention before they prosecuted. He also proved a printed report of the proceedings of the Society produced to him by Mr. Phillips.

Mr. PHILLIPS proceeded. He said his client was an humble unprotected man, persecuted by a Society who had never yet been known since their first institution to prosecute a rich man. Their conduct was calculated to justify the remark of Lord Bacon, who said, that laws were cobwebs which catch little flies, and which the great ones break through. Under pretence of supporting morality and religion, the Vice Suppressors have dared to publish a lie under their hands—they have published to the world that they only prosecute for libel, when admonition has failed—their Secretary has proved that they prosecuted the defendant without any admonition. Mr. Adolphus had admitted that the publication of the novel was of

long standing. It was translated into English in the year 1789, and was to be had at all the great circulating libraries. Mr. Adolphus had said he did not know why the defendant had left his house in the Strand:—he might have known it—it was because Mr. Benbow was prosecuted by another Gang, who procured him to be imprisoned ten months, and then turned him out of his dungeon without daring to bring him to trial, his last shilling gone, and family brought to ruin.—These were modern champions of Christianity. By aid of the money which they extracted from dupes by false pretences, they dragged to the bar and to the dungeon poor men, who must be ruined by the expense, though acquitted of the charge, while the rich were suffered to saturate themselves in crime. The song they had heard was truly ridiculous as a subject of prosecution; there were at that moment a hundred worse on the music tables of the daughters of the Vice Suppressors. Without a vicious imagination the works were harmless, and with it scarcely any works would be so. Not a novel, out of which something might not be picked by the Vice Suppressors to make a libel. As for the pictures, there was no one who had visited the picture galleries of the great, who had not seen many more exceptionable. They were to be seen at Carlton-house, at Windsor, at the Marquess of Stafford's, and at the exhibitions at Somerset-house, which the most modest ladies paid for admission to see. If the Society had performed their promise to the public, and admonished the defendant before they proceeded to prosecute him, they might be entitled to some credit for their motives; but where the Christian volume says "forgive," they say "persecute;" where Christ says "let him that is without sin amongst you cast the first stone," instead of being abashed, they unite their powers to crush a poor man.

The CHAIRMAN shortly charged the Jury, that they were the sole judges of the case.

The Jury retired for about ten minutes, and returned a verdict Not Guilty.

CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN MR. CARLILE AND THE REVEREND PRIEST OF THE LEEDS CHRISTIAN REFORMERS.

SIR,

Leeds, July 10, 1822.

As you have thought proper to publish to the world, as true, through the medium of your Republican, some of the most false and scandalous statements ever invented, respecting myself and others; I shall deem no other apology necessary for thus troubling you, than a desire to contradict the infamous slander already alluded to. I should, perhaps, have done this sooner had I been at home at the time you sent your slanders forth; but my being absent at that time will form a sufficient justification for my silence until now.

As a public character who has long contended for equal rights and equal justice as the foundation of all government and law, I should have expected from you a different line of conduct than that you have of late pursued; but it is evident such principles do not regulate your conduct, for had you been at all actuated by such, you would not on the bare assertion of one, or more individuals, strike at the private character of any one, without hearing something from both sides. What has been your motive for slandering the Christian Reformers of Leeds, is best known unto yourself; but as one of that body, and particularly as the individual you are pleased to denominate their priest, I feel it a duty I owe to myself and to the body at large, to contradict, and that too in the most positive manner, your base calumnies. In your 3d No. Vol. VI. of your Republican, you have thought proper to say, that you have ascertained that the Christian Reformers of Leeds, are a very corrupt body of men; thus intimating to your readers, by the word ascertained, that your assertion is most certainly true; but, Sir, you have not given the proof yet which is required, for though you say you have ascertained this of the Christian Reformers; yet, the world knows nothing of the means by which you did ascertain this, and mere assertions are not proofs, and for aught we know, the manner and means by which you have ascertained that the Christian Reformers are corrupt may have been as corrupt as you wish to make that body appear.

With regard to myself, you have been pleased to say that I am arrogant and dishonest, and am finely swindling my dupes. With respect to the first charge that of arrogance, I have to say, those that are better acquainted with me than you are, will be better able to judge, and as for your opinion, or that of your informant, I value it but little. If to think it degrading to me to associate with such men as are lost to every principle of justice and all sense of shame, and such I judge your informant (or informants) to be, be accounted arrogance, in such arrogance will I glory. With respect to the second charge that of dishonesty; here, Sir, I am disposed to dispute the matter with you, and as you have made the assertion I call for your proofs, nay, I demand it as an act of justice, both to myself and to all with whom I may have to do, this, Sir, you cannot in fairness deny me, I therefore do demand it, and challenge you to prove any one dishonest act of mine towards any individual; and remember, Sir, if you fail in this, then is Richard Carlile posted for a base, cowardly, assassin-like slanderer, unworthy the name of a man, or a place in society. With respect to the third charge, that of finely swindling my dupes, as you are pleased to call the Christian Reformers. Here, Sir, "a tale I could unfold" which might serve to place characters in their true light, and show who are, and who are not the dupes and the swindlers. But to the question of my swindling, I have to say, Sir, that your informants would do well to deal in truth, rather than seek to mislead you for the purpose of serving their own diabolical purposes. Had they, Sir, given you rightly to understand the principles upon which we as a body of professing Christians act, you

would have been spared the trouble of stating to the whole a something you knew nothing about. However, as your informants have left you deficient, in this respect I will take the trouble to say something upon it myself. As a body of men possessing the right to think for ourselves, we hold not ourselves responsible to any man, or set of men, for our theological opinions; we, therefore, claim the right to do what we call worship, in that way or manner which is most consistent with our views upon such subjects; and thinking good to have what is called preaching among us we attend at stated times for such purposes. But now mark, Sir, although we have public speaking as you have been informed, yet none who thus exercise are paid for it, their services of that kind are gratuitous; how then, I would ask, are the people swindled? When no money is collected for the priest, as you are pleased to call me, nor any hire given, or pecuniary remuneration made, how, I again ask, are the people swindled? If I am correct in my judgment of your informant, it is he who is the swindler, and who because he has failed in his former attempts to crush a people whose views upon theological subjects differ from his own, now seeks through the medium of you, as his tool, to slander those whom his open hate and vicious deeds have had no power to harm. But, Sir, for myself, I alike defy him or you to prove the slanders true, you have sent forth into the world; and let me tell you if there be a dupe in this affair you are, in my opinion, the dupe of your informant, who under the pretended garb of friendship, is acting so as to prevent many from doing what they otherwise would have done in commiseration for your unjust incarceration.

This letter I request you to give insertion in the same vehicle which conveyed the slanders upon

JOHN WARD.

TO THE REVEREND JOHN WARD, PRIEST OF
THE LEEDS' CHRISTIAN REFORMERS.

Dorchester Goal, July 15, Year 1822,

REVEREND SIR,

of your gross Idolatry.

WHILST I grant that you have a right to demand from me publicly, through the medium of the Republican, reasons and explanation for my attack upon you and your flock of Christians, and proofs of my assertions; I do not grant that you had fair reasons to expect that I should print the letter which you have written to me; because no man can be justly expected to print abuse upon himself, even if he has been faulty and deserves it, which in this instance I by no means admit to be my case. But abusive as is the strain of your letter, I can make allowance for the feelings which

my attack must have excited in your mind, and as I feel I can fully justify what I have written of and concerning you, and those whom you represent, I did not hesitate a moment about printing your letter, particularly, as its stile tends to support part of what I have written of you.

Your first point of enquiring is my motive for attacking you and your flock; and secondly you ask for the proofs of the assertions I have made in the course of such attacks. To both of those points you shall have an answer. My motive for attacking you is founded upon the principle that you and your flock, whilst professing to be Reformers, are pursuing a line of conduct that is opposed to all the first principles of Reform, and strengthening the deep rooted corruptions of this country. I look at you as being as much opposed to the principles of reform, of the radical reform, that I advocate, as any back bone supporter of all existing institutions with all their abuses. You are game as fair for me to hunt down as the Borougmonger's and the Bishops are. You and your flock are as much my opponents as are the Vice Society or any other corrupt Christian association in this country. You have formed yourselves into a society, and upon the title page of the rules you have laid down for your goverment, you call yourselves *United Christian Reformers*, whilst throughout those rules, so far from any principle of action being recognized that can promote the cause of Reform in any shape, you have but sown new seeds for corruption. I copy here the printed rules of your society as sent to me from Leeds.

General Rules for the Government of the Society of United Christian Reformers, at Hill-House-Bank, Leeds.

I. THE members of this society conceive the great end for which men ought to live, *to be the glory of God*, and the promotion of each others happiness in this present world. To accomplish which the more effectually they deem it necessary to unite, and meet once a week in small parties, of from twelve to twenty each, for the mutual benefit and edification of each other.

II. All persons wishing to become members of this institution, will have an opportunity of so doing by giving in their names to persons appointed to receive the same, and who will represent to the Committee any distressed case amongst those of whom he collects.

III. In order to alleviate the sufferings of our fellow creatures, by pecuniary aid in the time of sickness; all the members of this society (if able) are to contribute One-Penny per week, towards a fund to be appropriated to the relief of the distressed part of the community, if such distress arises from sickness, and all cases of distress to

be investigated by the Committee, and such as appear to have paramount claims, shall be the first to whom relief shall be afforded.

IV. The management of the affairs of this institution to be under the direction of a Committee of eighteen persons, to be chosen from the body, one half of the members to be persons of approved piety.

V. Six of the oldest members of the above-named Committee, to retire from office every three months, subject to re-election, or six others to be elected in their stead.

VI. All the members of this institution who are desirous of enjoying the *privileges of Christian fellowship, and promoting each others spiritual interest*: are to meet in small parties to be denominated a class, one of whom to be stiled a leader, whose office shall be to conduct the service of the meeting.

VII. *The only condition previously required of those who desire admission into these classes, is a desire to flee from the wrath to come, and to be saved from their sins, and it is therefore expected of all who continue therein, that they should evidence their desire of salvation by a suitable conduct before their brethren and the world.*

VIII. Each leader to be nominated by the Committee, and if approved of by the members with whom he is to meet, to be elected to his office.

IX. *Every leader is expected to enter into his office under the idea that he is accountable to God, for the souls entrusted to his care, and must therefore endeavour, by every Christian means, to promote true piety among the different members of his class.* He must also see each member if possible once a week, and make known to the Committee any distressed case which may arise amongst those who meet with him.

X. The appointment of preachers to be vested with the Committee; but no person who is not a regular preacher in some Christian Society, to be admitted to preach until heard in private and approved of by persons appointed for that purpose.

XI. The doctrines to be held forth and promulgated here, to be such as are contained in the Gospel, *viz. Universal Depravity, General Redemption by Jesus Christ, and the necessity of persevering in the practice of every Christian virtue.*

XII. The leaders and collectors to meet the Treasurer and the Secretary once every week, in order to pay in the contributions they have received.

XIII. The whole of the accounts of the society to be adjusted every Three months, and a statement of the receipts and disbursements of all monies, to be made known to the members.

XIV. All persons wishing to enjoy the benevolent advantages of this society, whether they wish to become members of the religious part of it or not, may be entitled to all the benefits of it, by paying One-Penny per week, and at the same time may belong to any other Christian church they think proper.

The parts of your rules which I have placed in Italics, are

those parts I noticed in addressing Mr. John Butler of Bolton, to which I now refer you for the purpose of avoiding repetitions here; but I have now to observe, that there is the stamp of mystery, obscurity, and dishonesty upon the very face of the rules of your association. They are the worst drawn rules for any association that I ever met with. The first rule is a copy from the class system of the methodists, and purposes a means that is utterly inadequate to the end. To accomplish the mutual happiness of mankind all such sectarianism as you recommend should be abolished; for I have a right to conclude that you, as a leading man in this association, drew up those rules. The promotion of each others happiness is only to be accomplished in seeking more rational institutions than exist in this country at present, and not in dividing ourselves into juntas of twenties, monopolizing each others interest and support, and, as far as possible, secluding ourselves from the general interest. All such clans and classes are michievous to society as a whole, and form a disturbance of the general harmony, by setting up unjust and unnecessary conflicting interests. There ought to be no such classifications, but the whole of society should combine to improve their institutions and resources for mutual and general happiness. It is thus, Reverend Sir, I view your corporate interests as injurious to the whole, and a part of the same system that has generated all the abuses under which we now live. You lay down no one rule of action for advancing the cause of Reform, or for promoting the general happiness of mankind, therefore your title is evidently false, and your pretensions dishonest as an association.

There is nothing to object to your second rule, save that the last member of the sentence that forms it has no relation to any thing that has gone before it, and is incoherent of itself. The writer's head seems to have been filled with the idea of the *collections*. Ah! it is the *collections* that keep all such associations together. This is the main spring of all delusion.

The third rule is the subject of collecting money again, but the purposed application is good; only we know that the proposed and real applications of such collections too often differ.

The fourth rule is ludicrous in the extreme, very suspicious and obscure, and carries the tinge of dishonesty with it. One half of the members of the Committee of Eighteen for the management of the affairs of the Institution, are to

be persons of *approved piety*! What does this *approved piety* consist of? Who are to be the judges of it, as I should presume every member would lay claim to it, and feel offended if told that he or her was not of *approved piety*? Besides, what is the other half to consist of, *approved reprobates*? There is some hidden lurking scheme in this rule.

The fifth rule again forms a shuffle, and resembles the French system of forming the Chamber of Deputies. I am informed, Reverend Sir, that you now feel a horror in the thought of the French Revolution, and an attachment to the new order of things, and that you declaim like a Burke upon this subject; and say, the Radical Reformers have the same object in view, or wish to spill as much blood as was spilt in France. You are a very moderate and delicate Reformer I expect, Mr. Ward, though I have heard something about your preparing a famous pike before you turned priest, and, even since that, you have preached with loaded pistols in your pockets. Smithson will support this, or the general tenour of it, if you want my author. If I mistake not he took care of your pike for a time.

I pass on to the twelfth rule, which prescribes, that *the Leaders and Collectors are to meet the Treasurer and the Secretary every week* with the contributions, but it happens that there is no rule for the appointment of any Treasurer or Secretary. I presume, without any authority, that you, Reverend Sir, as a matter of course, fill those two offices, as the most important in the concern.

The last rule allows any persons to subscribe their pennies, whether they be Christian Reformers or not! The pennies form the main point, and though you say in your letter that you have no pecuniary interest in the concern, I understand, that besides these weekly pennies, there are continual collections made for one purpose and another. Poh! there was never a *Priest* who preached for nothing.

I have yet further reasons and explanations for my motive in attacking you and your flock. Silently watchful as I am of every thing that passes in the country connected with the question of Reform, my attention was excited at a paragraph in the newspapers, which announced the rapid increase of a sect calling themselves the Christian Reformers at Leeds. Such a paragraph passed through all the papers, sometime last year, at least, I saw it in several different papers, and it was, I believe, copied from "The Leeds Mercury," I had previously read the report of the trial at

York, and wondered how Smithson came into such a connection, but at that time I had no private or friendly correspondence with any person at Leeds. After the subject of Mr. Brayshaw's Declaration was laid before me, and I found there were some genuine Republicans in Leeds, whose names were now known to me, I wrote to enquire the particulars of the conduct, rules, regulations, and numbers of this sect of Christian Reformers, with the full intent of making an attack upon their professions and principles, under the conviction that the denomination they had assumed was a proof of corruption, and under the suspicion that that denomination was set up in opposition to my principles as a Deistical Reformer. Antichristian as I am, and have been these last four or five years, it must be admitted that such an association as you lead must be fair game for me to attack, particularly after I was informed that this sect of Christian Reformers were inveterately hostile to those persons who met and lectured at a place called the Temple of Reason, and who I understand were composed of Atheists or Materialists, Deists, and others, who called themselves Free-thinking Christians, mutually discussing and mutually tolerating each others principles. I was informed, and I believe Mr. Byerley was my author, that the members, or a part of the members, of your sect, vented a great deal of rage, venom, and insult upon those persons who met in this place, called the Temple of Reason, and would frequently exclaim, that *the persons and the place ought to be burnt together*. This intelligence I received before last Christmas, so you may see that I have not been overhasty in attacking you as a sect, but I have been waiting and collecting, from that time to the present, every species of information I could collect, and every kind of printed or written document that I could obtain relating to your association. I have received your printed rules as you have seen. I have received a set of the Leeds Papers that reported and commented upon the trial at York, between you and Smithson, with a written statement by Smithson of the whole matter, and here I have every necessary justification for charging you, and the sect whom you lead, with corruption and dishonesty. The whole statement of Smithson was supported by the printed report of the trial, and above all, by the verdict of the Jury. You and others who were considered leaders, arrogantly and dishonestly set the man at defiance, you dared him to sue you at law, by saying, *that he was poor and could not*, and that you, and

your flock, could, united, spend five hundred pounds against him, and you were sure that would crush him by buying more law than he could buy! To the declaration which he brought against you, you pleaded the general issue, which was a denial of the whole debt, and you have been from that time saddled with the merited stigma of being the sect of "*Debt-denying Christians*." For public information it may be necessary that I here state that the debt was for fitting up a place as a meeting-house for your sect, as I understand, at the first time of your so meeting. The man whom you employed was a poor man; he is, to my knowledge, a sober, a mild, an industrious, and inoffensive man: he laid out, in materials, his little all for your accommodation; and his bill, which I understand was somewhere about thirty pounds, was wholly allowed him as a fair charge by the Jury; but not until he had been compelled to ask forbearance from his landlord for his rent, and to pawn the whole of his household furniture, and even his wife's apparel to cover the proceedings preparatory to trial, to compel you and your flock to the payment of a just debt! If this be not a proof of corruption and dishonesty, there was never any thing of the kind in existence. Recollect, this was not a case where the prejudices of a Jury could operate, or if there had been prejudice it would most likely have fallen upon Smithson, as a very forward man in the cause of Reform, and an avowed Deist or Materialist. I suppose one of your Christian maxims was to keep no faith with heretics, though Smithson informs me that you are privately as much of a Christian as to be a reader and admirer of "*Palmer's Principles*," and "*Mirabaud's System of Nature!*" So far from its being true as your letter to me expresses that Smithson (for he is the man alluded to) has endeavoured and failed to crush you and your sect, it is evident that you and your sect have endeavoured and failed to crush him. You, Reverend Sir, must certainly have calculated that I was ignorant of all these matters, and have hoped to surprise me by such an arrogant, insolent, abusive, and peremptory demand for proofs and explanations. You shall have enough of them before I have done, and you may then post me for what you like. I despise your threat: your posting cannot affect me, nor my character, nor draw from me the support of one honest man. I have had posting enough from different Christian sects, if that could injure me; for I have been posted in every church, chapel, and meeting-house in the Island, and most probably I have been already

well posted by you and your flock. At any rate I know that I have had plenty of posting from the half-Reformers of Leeds. There is no posting or abuse that a Christian can heap upon me but that I shall deem an honour, so post away when, where, and how you like. I have no doubt but the woman, who, in your chapel, so far forgot their rules and the glory of God to cry "WARD FOR EVER," would readily cry "BURN CARLILE." At the commencement of your letter, with the exception of, or prior to my attack upon you and your flock, you profess to respect my general conduct, but, be it known to you, that there is no possibility of an amalgamation between your principles and mine, unless you throw up the character and epithet of a Christian Reformer. I seek the abolition of the Christian religion, as the chief corruption and principal abuse in this country, consequently as you are its professed supporter, we must be enemies in a moral point of view, though I am for no weapon but the pen to be used in such a warfare. I neither wish to burn you, your flock, nor your temple of idolatry, and I call upon you to exact a penance proportionate to the crime from those of your fanatical flock who are for burning the infidels of Leeds and their Temple of Reason together. If you wish to improve the morals of your flock, you must root out such vicious habits as they now display. I shall bring forward some corroborations of the character I now charge upon them in a letter to Mr. Wooler.

Independent of the documents before mentioned, I have also received the printed correspondence between you and the flock at Hunslet Moor, of the same denomination. The flock at Hunslet, I understand, were so much like Reformers, that they used to meet in their chapel to read the political publications of the day, and that you denounced this practice and refused to come and preach to them if they persisted in it. They wisely persisted, and a separation seems to have taken place between what is pompously denominated the mother church and her daughter; or in other words, the Hunslet people were more disposed to dispense with your preachings than with their own political readings.

You, priest like, evidently wished to keep them ignorant of every thing but what you might think proper to preach to them. This to my mind was an odd specimen of your reforming honesty. You keep up the title of Christian Reformer, and yet you forbid your dupes to acquire political information in their place of congregation, under the base and hypocritical pretence that it is a profanation of their re-

ligious ceremonies. That correspondence exhibits you as a priestly arrogant man, and your domination over the Hunslet people was very properly resisted, and your services dispensed with. Professing to be a Reformer you were dishonest in denying political information to those who followed you. Your motive was base, your pretence hypocritical.

Independent of your connection with the Christian Reformers I have never heard but one act or charge of dishonesty made upon you, and you shall have that as I have heard it. I am told that you have lately got a house built, and that after the job was done you shew a disposition to refuse payment, as in Smithson's case, that the builder either threatened or actually commenced a process at law, and that you brought him to your terms by threatening him, that *you would dispose of all your property, go to Gaol for the debt, and pay him by the Insolvent Debtors Act.* This information, in the different letters I received upon the matter, was coloured higher than I have coloured it, to your prejudice. Smithson will own himself the author of this information to me. It came in pursuance of my request that all possible information should be sent me before I began to notice your sect. I have acted quite deliberately in my notice of you and I am still satisfied that I have neither said or done any thing wrong. I tell you candidly that my object and desire is to put down the new fangled idolatry which you are attempting to raise in Leeds and other places. I consider this to be my duty as a matter of principle, but I have no desire to use such measures as you impute to me. I verily believe that all I have said of you is truth and not slander. My first intention, on hearing there was such a sect rising in Leeds, was, to impeach your principles in the manner in which you will see I have done it, in two letters addressed to those who call themselves Christian Reformers, but when I received such accounts of your conduct and proceedings, as I have here unfolded, when I learnt that you, though professing to be a Reformer, were hostile to Republican Principles, and charged every species of villainy upon them, which you did on the subject of addressing Sir Charles Wolseley, I felt it my duty to retaliate upon you, and to expose your conduct and motives as far as possible.

The chief part of the information I have received of you and your flock has been from Smithson; and in his last letter to me, he authorizes me to give up all his letters if asked for, and says he will support all I have written of you and your flock, unless it be the private charge of dishonesty

upon you individually, which I had inferred for myself from the whole of the facts or statements here displayed.

Now, Reverend Sir, I consider that I have given you fair play, and if you wish for any more reasons, or explanations, or authorities that I have for what I have said of you, I will accommodate you as far as possible. The assertion of mine that is the least supported, is that of your "*finely swindling your dupes*". I drew the inference of such conduct from the correspondence with the Hunslet people, and the rules of your association: for rules more vague I never saw. There is no one definite or well understood principle or rule of action laid down in them; and to my view they carry the design of dishonesty and duplicity.

If you write again, I hope you will shew your dupes that you can defend the principles, you recommend, against the attacks I have made upon them, in my two letters to their body. I will allow you through the medium of the Republican to refute any thing I have written, touching either persons or principles, or to ask for further explanations, but I will not insert another such a letter as the last, nor any thing that is abusive to myself or friends. Like a good Christian, grant me your blessings and your prayers though I despitefully use you, and though I have smitten you on one cheek, you are in duty bound, professing to act upon Gospel instructions, to hold up the other for another blow. Gentle Christian farewell.

R. CARLILE.

TO SUCH CHRISTIANS AS CALL THEMSELVES REFORMERS, AND SUCH REFORMERS AS CALL THEMSELVES CHRISTIANS.

LETTER II.

Dorchester Gaol, July 15, 1822,

Idolators, of your gross Idolatry.

IN my first letter I endeavoured to sketch out to you the origin of the Christian Religion and to shew you that it had no foundation but in fable; in this I promised to shew you what Christianity has been in practice, how it has obscured the minds and enslaved the bodies of those who have been subject to its influence, and how it is impossible that any man can honestly support it who wishes to be considered a Radical Reformer of the abuses which are practised upon us in

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this country by the institutions in Church and State whence emanate all our laws. If I have not yet convinced you that you are idolators, by shewing how your religion originated in fable and fraud, I will try what effect an exhibition of your present practices will have towards that object.

As Christianity has split into many hundred different sects, each of whom has laid claim to be the only genuine practice of the system, and denounced all the others as heresies, it is somewhat difficult to embrace the whole thing so as to exhibit it effectually; but as the object is not here to dispute the tenets of the different sects, but to give the best general view that can be given of the whole, it will be sufficient that all my tints can be recognized in the existing original, or indelible recollections of what it has been in the course of its too long career and existence.

Since the whole scene of the tale on which Christianity is founded has been confined to the small territory of Judea, and as we have a more authentic history in the writings of Josephus of the people who inhabited that territory at the time in which that scene has been dated, than we have of any other nation large or small, or at any other time, more authentic and more to be relied upon than ever the history of the civil wars between the tyrant Charles the First and the people of England, it has been fairly shewn that no such circumstances as the book called the New Testament describes ever took place within that territory at that or any other time. Since then this thing called Christianity has originated in fable and fraud, if the practice can be proved idolatrous, the fact that it is idolatry, will be doubly established, and be placed past all question. It is impossible to say now exactly where and when it did originate, or how it has been modified from the first suggestions that gave rise to it, but we can say that it occupied two centuries, or what we now call the second and third century of its era, in reaching its summit, or in getting itself recognized and incorporated as a state mythology. Early in the fourth century, Constantine, the Roman Emperor, after imbruing his hands in the blood of several of his nearest relatives, added to his title of Sovereign Pontiff of the Roman Mythology, that of being the Head of the Christian Church, and indiscriminately prayed and sacrificed to Jupiter and Jehovah, to Apollo and Jesus, to Venus and the Virgin Mary. As he extended his worship to these various idols he practised the only genuine toleration that was ever known to exist, and protected alike, and with impartiality, the Priests and the Priestesses attached to the

service of any and of every idol. In his reign there was no persecution but that which arose among the Christian sects and which was practised upon each other, in which Constantine was always found recommending a conciliation and mutual toleration; and enough he found to do throughout his life-time, in keeping from actual hostilities towards each other, the, by this time, turbulent and haughty Bishops and Priests. It is notorious that at the councils of Nice and Laodicea at the first of which Constantine presided, when the present book called the New Testament was decreed to be the word of God, the point was carried amidst abuse of the grossest kind, actual blows with the fists, and the greatest confusion, whilst the majority were actually opposed to the Emperor and the present arrangement, and it was only by banishing some and confining others, that the Emperor and his party could carry their wishes as to what books should be and what should not be called the inspired word of God, what should be condemned as apocryphal.

Notorious as it is that Christianity first made its way among the slaves and dregs of the Roman people, it was soon made to hold out such novel and such illusive hopes about a future state and an immortal life, that rich widows and matrons were soon found to embrace it, and those who had been the most pious devotees in the temple of Venus, could still gratify their inordinate desires by taking a Christian Bishop into their households to perform the double duty and devotion of a Priest and a Paramour. It was thus Christianity became what it has ever since continued, a system that is at the same time made to wipe out the stains of the conscience and to gratify all the lusts of the flesh, under the designation of that necessary coalition of sinning and praying for forgiveness. The logic of Christianity may be presumed to run thus: *Prayer is the duty of the Christian, if there were no sin there would be no need of prayer, therefore sinning is equally a Christian duty with prayer, or a part of the system of Christianity.* This logic is completely borne out by the articles agreed to by the Christian Reformers of Leeds, with whom "*universal depravity*" is a first and necessary principle, which they have consistently and pertinaciously continued to exhibit from their first association to the present time, and whilst they promised to live together for the glory of God, the Christian Reforming women, I am informed, are very apt to be led away by their passions, and to chaunt the name of their Priest instead of their God, in the common and constant chorus of "WARD FOR

EVER!!! We will live for the glory of God and be still working for-ward."

This must necessarily be the result of reading the recommendations and acting upon the precedents set down in those obscene books of the Jews which we call the Holy Bible. Upon the precedent set down about Adam and Eve having been in the greatest state of purity when they went naked, the Nicolaites, an early Christian sect, threw off all their dress, banished the passions of envy and jealousy, gave up their wives to each other, and partook of every thing in common, as the greatest state of purity, according to the precedent of Adam and Eve, and a strict practice of Christian equality according to the plan of Jesus and his disciples who ate and drank without producing any thing. This was once a feature of Christianity. There was also a sect called Christian Adamites founded upon nearly the same principles.

It would be an endless task to enumerate all the horrid vices practised by all the Christian sects—a task at which both the writer and the reader would sicken before a hundredth part of it had been got through, for little do the persons called Christians in the present day in this Island judge of what Christianity has consisted within these last sixteen hundred years in different places. It has been ten thousand times more odious than the religion of Mahomet, for the followers of Mahomet have strictly adhered to the instructions laid down in the Koran, whilst the Christians, having in most cases been deprived of the Bible, have formed and practised all sorts of hideous fantasies as parts and necessary parts of Christianity.

Some Christians, like the Nicolaites, have been for having every thing in common, leaving every thing to be provided for them by their Gods, and troubling about nothing, in this life; others, on the other hand, have considered it a part of Christianity to lead a life of celibacy and idleness, living upon the charity of others, as various orders of Monks, Friars, and Nuns have done, whilst the whole thing together may be viewed as the religion of idleness on the one hand, and unprofitable industry on the other. The Priests, who have rioted in every luxury and splendour upon the tithes and other exactions from industry, have preached up to the labouring man that poverty was the purest part of Christianity, and the surest guide to heaven and to the bosom of Abraham; but all this has been part of the plan of robbery, which distinguishes Christianity from all other idolatries. Gifts and sacrifices were always enforced as part of every

system of idolatry, but in no other save the idolatry of Christianity was poverty ever recommended as a guide to happiness.

In addition to the misery which this system for the perpetuation of poverty and ignorance has generated, millions upon millions and billions upon billions have been the human beings who owe their premature deaths to this falsely called religion of peace. Except in the history of the idolatries practised among the Jews, the Christians, and the Mahometans, we no where find that any other idolatry was ever the cause of war between any two nations; but these three races of idolators have felt it to be a divine command to exterminate each other and every other race of idolators that do not embrace their several systems alone. On this head, the Jews and the Christians have been the most barbarous and intolerant of the three, for where the Mahometans have conquered by arms they have sometimes been content with a tribute instead of a conversion, but not so with the Christians, conversion or death has been a standing maxim with them; whilst the Jews, who considered that not being born a Jew was a sure exclusion from the divine favour, have never failed to exterminate other nations where their power extended. I challenge contradiction to this paragraph, as a true portrait of the idolatries mentioned, and I add further, without the fear of contradiction, that these three idolatries have generated more human misery than all the idolatries of which we have any account authentic or fabulous in ancient or in modern history. To the Christian Religion we owe the invention of human torture and all the horrors, that have been practised in secret by its Inquisitors; and it may be truly said, that there is no one vice practised in Europe at this moment but has its origin and foundation in the practices of that Religion. I challenge the mention of any thing in the shape of vice or abuse known in Europe that I cannot trace to that source. What then can a *Christian Reformer* mean? What is such a character but a cheat and humbug? If there be intelligence in any such a character it is corrupt, for he is a pander to the base passions of an idolatrous multitude for the purpose of obtaining a popularity and distinction, equally base, and equally mutable and insecure. Viewing such a man as I do to be a deluder, I am his natural enemy, and will give him no peace until he can conquer me or I can conquer him upon a free discussion of our opposite tenets and principles. It is vain for such a man to tell me that I am no Reformer, and that

he will not notice my attack upon him, I tell him that I consider myself, and I know that I am so considered by thousands of others, as the only *Radical Reformer* in this country, that is at this time editing and publishing a periodical publication conducted upon the avowed principles of and for the purpose of obtaining such a Reform. All my contemporaries practice more or less delusion, as they find it more or less profitable and congenial to their own feelings. If there be any of them who spurn at this character, let them ask for explanatory reasons and they shall have them; if they can shew any reasons to the contrary of what I say, let them do so; they shall convince me of error and make me work cordially with them, for I am disposed so to do, if error in my conduct can be shewn that I cannot disprove, or I will continue to expose their errors until they work cordially with me. This must be the ground work of Union, if that union be meant to be useful, or any thing more than a delusion upon the multitude. Unions are practicable for bad as well as for good purposes, and like every thing else, their utility must be tested by free and fair discussions.

Some pretended Reformers cry out "Christianity is an institution of the country, and must be supported and respected." To such I answer, Christianity is no more an institution deserving such support and respect than the present Parliament. There is the same necessity for abolishing and reforming the one as the other, and of the two, Christianity is the greater evil. In that very important pamphlet, published by Wilson, at the Exchange, calculations upon the best information are made to shew, that the Christian Clergy of England, Wales, and Ireland, receive above eight millions sterling annually, and if that author's calculations be correct, I pledge myself to the fact, that the whole expence of supporting this institution called Christianity, extracted from the profits of the labour of the people, in what is called Great Britain and Ireland, in the joint shape of forced and voluntary contributions, is nothing short of twelve millions sterling annually. I wish to be understood as including all the contributions raised by Missionary and Tract Associations, and every other association for purposes connected with the Christian religion. Here then are twelve millions of money expended annually for the support of an institution which benefits not one single individual that contributes to it, but supports a body of Priests in idleness, whose sole business is to corrupt all our other political institutions, and to be hostilely opposed to the people in every

attempt to reform any one existing institution. Here is a sum of money equivalent to the support of even a splendid monarchical government, and if all the governments on the face of the earth were Republican, this sum of money would be nearly equal to the expences of managing the whole, after they had become well secured by the general extension of knowledge among the whole of the human race, and legislation established upon the principle of a full representation. What sort of a Reformer then must he be, who, whilst he feels and justly complains of the misery and distress produced by excessive taxation, would still wish to preserve this ignorance-preserving institution, this expensive blur upon society. The taxation which supports Christianity in this country would be a sufficient revenue to make Great Britain the strongest maritime power, and the most extensive commercial country on the face of the earth. It would be amply sufficient to constitute a government that should be respected within the Island by every member of the community, and command an equal respect from without, by its moral power, and by extending its principles of justice towards the great community of mankind. Let not then that man complain of taxation who wishes to preserve Christianity as a necessary religious institution: let such a man cease to call himself a Reformer.

Christianity in its present state is not only expensive, and not only a tax equivalent to the necessary expences of the whole state, but it again generates an idleness that may be said to be a loss equal to the tax it actually raises from the produce of industry. Neglecting to produce property, and squandering, improperly, property produced, are principles nearly alike in their effect. In the one case we lose what we neglect to produce, in the other we lose what we throw away in encouraging and supporting the total idleness and non-productive state of others. Upon this view of the case, Christianity may be viewed as a gulph for the annihilation of property or capital to the amount of twenty-four millions sterling annually. It is not I think an over-rated comparison to say, that as much time is wasted in following up the duties which Christianity prescribes, as is occupied in producing the value of the tax to support its idle Priests, and this beyond the necessary time for recreation and refreshment of the body after labour; for I am not an advocate for making every hour of waking an hour of labour. Eight hours of labour each day I think ought to be sufficient for acquiring all the necessaries, the comforts,

and the luxuries of life, and just that quantity of exercise that is essential to the preservation of health.

I candidly admit that Christianity is less powerful, less influential upon the manners of the people now than it was two or three centuries back, but it is not less expensive; and this falling of one side and continued expence on the other, affords the hope, that, the time is arrived or near when it may be freely and fairly discussed, its utility or nonutility as a national institution tested, and the whole thing abolished: for I am satisfied it cannot stand a discussion and so say my prosecutors.

The most important point for decision in the discussion of the value of Christianity as a religious institution, is, how far it is related to morality, or whether it increases or decreases the sum of moral virtue. The advocates for preserving the institution of Christianity as a national religion proclaim, that it is the basis of all morality, and every attempt to undermine the former, they say, is an attempt to undermine the latter; that is, they preach the doctrine that religion and morality are inseparable, that the latter is generated by the former, and that it cannot exist as a distinct principle or rule of human action and conduct. It is my duty to disprove this, or to cease all attack upon Christianity.

The first points for consideration are, what is morality? and what is religion or Christianity? Genuine morality is a voluntary adherence to a rectitude of conduct, in relation to our fellows in society, where the power to act contrary does exist and is alone restrained by the will, or a due sense of that duty towards others which is calculated to produce a mutual benefit. There is also a false or forced morality, or that which is involuntarily practical from the fear of the punishment which the regulations of society award to its non-observance, or its violation. Religion is expressive of a belief in some omnipotent object called God or Gods, the existence of whom has no foundation beyond the brains of those who feign and who worship that existence. Worship is nothing more than the utterance of words under certain postures of the body to that existence which is no more than the fiction of the brain, therefore the joint act of uttering those words, and feigning that existence, constitutes the whole of religion. Now here it may be seen in a moment, upon this definition of the two words, which I call a complete definition, that they have no kind of relation to each other, and that they form two distinct rules of action among mankind. I grant the possibility of a religious man

being at the same time a moral man, though I infer, from my observation of men and manners and my knowledge of the history of man, that religion, generally, has tended to corrupt and destroy morality, upon the ground that morality is a principle or rule of action that is totally confined to man and man, whilst religion fills the mind with an object of fear and terror that tends to lessen the value that should be attached to morality by drawing the attention of the religionist to the contemplation of a mysterious fiction, as an object paramount to man and all moral and social duties. The object for which I have here to contend is, that a man who rejects all religion can be a strictly moral man. If I can establish this point I am sure that I shall have annihilated every thing that can be said as to the necessity of observing and practising a something called religion; particularly, if I shew that the mind that is untainted with religion has more liberty, more scope, and a better opportunity for the practice of morality.

The definition which I have given of religion, and which I presume is a definition that cannot be impeached, shews, that it is a principle or rule of conduct and action not relating to man and man, but to man and a something he fancies to be his maker; whilst morality is a principle or rule of conduct and action that relates solely to man and man and cannot be presumed to be set up as a necessary stipulation between man, and this unproved fictitious maker. Morality is a stipulation between man and man, or a mutual guarantee for mutual benefit and protection; but there can be no stipulation, no contract between man and this unproved existence called a God or Gods, upon whom, he founds what he calls his religion, it is therefore clear, that morality and religion have no kind of tie to each other, but rather, that they are opposite principles: that they are in moral electrics what positives and negatives are in physical electrics, which though there is a possibility of combination, generally repel each other as opposite and distinct principles. It cannot be proved that it is a moral duty of man to believe in any fictitious existences or to follow any kind of religion until the foundation of that religion, or those presumed existences, be proved to exist, which the more we attempt the more we get off it; therefore religion can claim no kin to morality in any sense or meaning of the words, whilst pure morality must reject religion as a futile and insane project of the human mind. Morality is a substantial good: Religion is a shadow,

an unsubstantial fiction of the mind; and, in my humble opinion, a positive evil, directly opposed to morality, because it destroys the powers of the human mind, by checking all improvement, and setting itself up as a barrier to progressive invention and discovery, and as an ultimate object on which every human mind should be fixed and confined; whilst that mind is a volatile elastic substance that can extend itself with the infinity of matter, or in other words that there is no limit assigned to the powers of the human mind. Here then I think I have fairly shewn that morality and religion are not inseparable, but rather, that they cannot consistently combine, for it is a part of morality to seek out, to support, and to propagate truth, and annihilate error and falsehood; whence I infer it to be a moral duty, to endeavour to annihilate Christianity, as a system of religion and idolatry founded in fraud, fiction and fable. I shall shortly extend my ideas and arguments upon this subject in a letter to Chief Justice Abbott, who, I find, on the trial of Mrs. Wright, has again wickedly, falsely and unblushingly asserted, that my publications tend to sap the morals of the people of this country. I will prove to his Justiceship that my publications are they alone, with similar ones that now issue from the press, that promote the growth of morality and check the raging progress of immorality that emanates from this Christian Government, and from such Christian Judges as himself, Bailey and Best.

The advocates for the divinity of Christianity have brought forward an argument that its rapid growth displayed something more than human means. Rapid growth! What! can we call a thing that takes two centuries in maturing itself a rapid growth? Not more than half of the people in the Roman Provinces had embraced Christianity in the beginning of the fourth century, from which we now date, which was full two centuries from its origin. Let us look back two centuries now and consider the immense lapse of time! Two centuries back, the first of the Stuart family James the First had not finished his reign, and the people of this Island were very little better than barbarians in manners and knowledge. There was a little pedantry at Court and among a few of the aristocracy, but any thing like sound knowledge did not exist. The height of knowledge at this time was to know the general contents of the Bible, and at this time that horrid fanaticism was engendered that desolated the country for a quarter of a century afterwards, until the whole people became heartily sick of civil war, and

gladly brought over Charles the Second from the continent to put a stop to it: for the civil wars between the first Charles and the Parliament were as much the wars of religion as of politics. In the mind there is very little difference in looking back two hundred years or two thousand, as there are but few objects that come to our view that have weathered two centuries. If we date the first philosophical attack upon the Christian Religion a century back, we may now see that it will not occupy another century in driving the whole thing out of existence; so that its decline, I calculate, will be much more rapid than its growth; and I for one will batter it and mock its pretended divinity, like the Jew Elijah mocked the divinity of Baal! Where, where is your Christian God, is he asleep or gone a journey? Pray to him, cry to him to keep you, and I will laugh, so as you will give up robbing and imprisoning those who oppose you.

I presume that I have said enough to justify the inference that Christianity is a human institution generated in fraud and fable, and embraced by the Government as an additional means of fleecing the people, and supporting all kinds of corruptions. The great expence which attaches to its support proves it the greatest abuse in this country, and as I have before said, that man is not half a Reformer, and has no claim to be called a Reformer at all, that does not seek its annihilation as a state institution. I am a decided advocate for reforming the Parliament, and annihilating every vestige of Kingcraft; but I am so far convinced of the superior importance of annihilating every species of Priestcraft, that if the matter were put to my choice, which of the two should be first got rid of, the corruptions of the State or the Church, I should say the latter, as by far the worst of the two. Kingcraft would very soon become harmless if it had not the support of the Priests. Who can look at Spain and not deplore the mischief, the actual danger to its free constitution, that arises from the prevalence of Priestcraft in that fine country.

Christian Reformers! it is such a state of things as we now witness in Spain, that I wish to guard against in this country. You see what the wealth of the Priests can do in that country towards corrupting thousands of the ignorant peasantry, but recollect, that the wealth of the Priests of this country is ten times as great, and would be as liberally spent, for the preservation of all existing abuses. I have no fear or doubt but a Reformed Parliament would soon lessen the power and the wealth of the Priests in this country, but

I see the importance of clearing away that bigotry and prejudice which those Priests have ever possessed the power of raising with an ignorant and fanatical multitude. I conclude for the present, but it is probable I may soon find occasion to address you again, if I find you persevere in calling yourselves Christian Reformers.

R. CARLILE.

TO MR. R. CARLILE, DORCHESTER GAOL.

SIR,

London, July 7, 1822.

THE intrepidity with which you have defended the right of freely discussing and publishing all matters of opinion, and the manly fortitude you have constantly displayed under the bitter persecutions of the hypocritical disciples of that religion which more than all others has been

“Blood-nursed, and watered by the widows tears.”

Has inspired me with respect for your talents, and convinced me that you are governed by sincere motives and the genuine love of truth and freedom; and therefore I think it my duty to contribute my share towards discharging those infamous fines which Christian meekness has imposed upon you, with what will, I trust, prove the vain hope of crushing the man who has dared to attack, with so much pertinacity, the tottering fabric of religious folly. Enclosed you will find £1. as my subscription, and I cannot help calling upon three individuals, who, like myself, are now enjoying that eternal peace and tranquillity of mind, which is the result of the philosophical spirit, thus to come forward and discharge the debt they owe to Philosophy. Let them reflect that those great men whose writings have been the means of enfranchising their minds from the horrors and gloom of religious frenzy, were the victims of the bigotry and tyranny of their day, which had it not been thus manfully assailed, would still have wielded its leaden sceptre over the mind of man, and that it is not generosity, but an imperious duty to support all who shall suffer in their endeavours to destroy that monitor which ever has been, which is, and which always will be, while it exists, the foe of the human race.

*

P. S. I observe that several of your Correspondents date their communications in the year of the Carpenter's Wife's Son. We have heard of the golden age of the world, of the iron age, and the leaden age, why, as our era takes its date from the birth of a Carpenter, might not this be called the WOODEN age? which would be quite expressive, and classical withal, this I beg to offer to the consideration of philosophers.

WE shall be glad to hear often from the above correspondent and he may rely on having his wishes complied with as expressed in his private note. We return thanks for his contribution to the discharge of what he has been pleased to honour us with calling the *debt of philosophy*.

EDITOR.

TO MR. R. CARLILE.

DEAR SIR,

Bradford, June 19, 1822.

THE manner in which you have answered your presumptuous, and I may add insolent Correspondent of Huddersfield, (published in No. 2, Vol. 6, of "The Republican,") must, I think, have given the highest satisfaction to all your readers, at least to every one who has any knowledge of the nature of the human mind; or any just claim to the appellation of philosopher; and, I presume, a great majority of your regular readers are persons enjoying an acute and refined sensibility and a considerable share of truly philosophic knowledge; indeed I am happy to say that this is the case with most of those I am acquainted with.

I cannot free myself from thinking that the first part of Mr. Shepherd's letter proves that he was not guided by truth, nor does it appear from that part of his correspondence that he is a searcher after it. Had Mr. Shepherd but duly observed the effects produced upon his *own* mind by his breathing, eating, and drinking, I think he would never have written to you what he has done. I compare the human mind to a very complicated and extremely delicate machine, which on being placed in a peculiar situation, a mere breath of air effects it and sets it in motion; and I conceive that wholesome food and genial beverage, have a similar effect on the mind to what applied power and pure oil have upon a machine.

Will any man assert that the mind is not greatly dilated by the very atmosphere the breast inhales, or that peculiar air does not produce peculiar thoughts. If the mind were something foreign to matter it would not be dependent upon it as it evidently is. For those aliments which prove the most nourishing and salutiferous to the whole body, are the most conducive to the health and vigour of the mind, if this *alone* be admitted, I cannot conceive how the materiality of the mind can rationally be denied. If the mind be not material how does it happen that there is as great a degree of similitude between the mind of parents and their offspring (when arrived at maturity) as there is between their figures and countenances.

The great dissimilitude we often discover between the mind of a father and that of his son, generally arises from the one having been trained up under very different circumstances to the other; and then, these same circumstances produce as wide a difference in the outward and general appearance of parties, as in their minds.

It is my opinion at present, that the mind is nothing more or less than a **VOLATILE SUBSTANCE** which arises from the whole brain, because it appears to me that unless the brain be in a degree of fermentation, the mind is neither fertile or active; and extremes in heat and cold prove unfavourable to the energies of intellect; and the mere position of the body often has a very powerful effect on the mind.

I have not yet read any of "Lawrence's Lectures," nor any other author upon the mind, but during the last three years (since I began to read deistical works) I have tried many experiments upon my own mind; but I here remark that I consider this to be an injurious and dangerous practice; however, it has sufficiently satisfied me that the mind is *entirely material*.

Had your reason and the effects of your efforts been as Mr. Shepherd asserts, the Priests and the Government would never have acted towards you and your friends as they have done. But believe me neither the Church, or Government, fear any thing from the ignorant, superstitious, imprudent, and vicious part of the community; for this *ignorant, depraved, and infatuated mass of human matter, forms the chief corner stone of the present Church and State.*

But it is the daring activity of the wise and virtuous that constitutes the ground of their fears, and the *aristocratical* tyrants, both spiritual and temporal, tremble at the increasing numbers of philosophic philanthropists that are darting into life, not only in this country but in many parts of the world. And they will and must continue to fear and tremble, for the wise and virtuous will not, cannot be converted, or gained over to the side of error, superstition, and injustice, by the power of vulgar opinion, nor by any *promised, or anticipated views of pecuniary advantage*. No, there is such a sublimity of sentiment naturally existing in the breast of a pure Republican, that must at once convince every penetrating mind that he cannot be sordid, mean, or selfish. No, his views of benevolence are not confined to his native country, but he has at heart the interests of the whole human race, nor does it stop here with many, for they extend their kindness to all sensitive existence. In short a true Republican is an universal Philanthropist. He is not attached to any ancient errors or superstition, but he equally holds in suitable contempt the principles which enslave either body or mind; and he who dares to stem the mighty torrents of superstition and hereditary error (which are the true parents of all our misery) is a man (I am bold to say it) who possesses the very essence of virtue, for utility is virtue; and he who produces the true essentials for driving superstition, error, and misery from any nation, most assuredly merits the unbounded gratitude and utmost support of all his fellow sufferers, and of course, the praise and support of every lover of truth.

I am happy to find that political truth is making rapid progress, not only in America, Spain, Portugal, and France, but in England and Scotland. When I say political truth, I take it for granted that you and every honest and enlightened politician understands that I

mean the great extension of Republican principles, for short of pure Republicanism there can be no political equity, therefore I consider it a duty to stimulate, and seriously recommend, every lover of liberty and reciprocal justice to propagate these equitable principles, by all rational and prudent means within their power; if this be done, they may soon expect to reap and enjoy the fruits of their labour. There are many men of great property, who were but a short time since unfriendly to any alteration in the system of government of this country, but who are now willing and desirous to join the ranks of the Reformers of the House of Commons; but such a Reform *only* cannot be a lasting good. Republicans, remember that your ranks are increasing daily, and nothing but *death* can ever lessen your number, for the very atmosphere which true Republicans have inhaled is too much rarified by *reason* to allow them to swallow the absurdities of monarchy, or suffer themselves to be priest-ridden *again* into the mists of error and superstition.

Mr. Shepherd seems to consider your labours as vain and useless, but to me they appear very different. In my opinion the *principal* motives that impelled you to act as you have done, and which still stimulate you to continue the same arduous pursuit, are the following:—The love of moral and physical truth; the love of humanity, reciprocal justice, and universal happiness. If this be true, I feel no hesitation in saying that you are deserving the highest praise and esteem that the humane and learned can bestow. For the happiness of the *philosopher* as well as that of the man of *feeling* is essentially diminished by the human race continuing to prefer long established error and folly to important discoveries, wisdom and truth. And whilst men continue to despise philosophy, and totally neglect the study of nature they will tenaciously adhere to inconsistency, error, and superstition. Thus they must remain quite ignorant of their true condition in the world, and what is calculated to promote their real interests. For nothing short of the complete overthrow of fanaticism, fraud, and political despotism, on one hand, and the full developement of science and philosophical truth on the other; can possibly render mankind universally enlightened and happy. And whenever this epocha of Republican liberty, moral and physical knowledge, shall arrive, (which is sure and certain at some period not far distant) then, and then only, will be the commencement of human peace, perfection, and uncontrouled felicity.

Dear Sir, hoping that we may soon see all those objects fully accomplished which the universal Philanthropist has in view,

I remain your sincere Friend, and well-wisher,

J. B. S.

P. S. I am not ashamed of my name, but afraid of losing my bread, as one of your Subscribers at Portsea says. Before you shall remain in want of a Shopman I will come and sell for you.

The Letter to Mr. Wooler is omitted for want of room.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

I HAVE received for the first time, this last week, a copy of the letter addressed by Mr. Lawrence, the Surgeon, and author of Lectures on Physiology &c. to Sir Richard Carr Glynn, as extracted from the Monthly Magazine for July, and set out in opposite columns with the celebrated abjuration of Galileo. An extract of this letter alone had been previously sent to me, copied into the Sherborne Mercury, which was particularly pointed out to my attention by being interlineated and surrounded with a profusion of red-ink. Sorry as I am to think that Mr. Lawrence has been placed in so painful a situation, and which I view as a strictly parallel case to that of Galileo. I am less disposed to censure his conduct than the conduct of his fellows in the same profession for not coming manfully forward to support him in the trying situation in which he was placed in the year 1819. Let those who stood silently by and saw him stripped of all that could make life desirable to him take shame to themselves, and not now murmur about this sorry, pitiful, and unmeaning retraction. I view the matter on the part of Mr. Lawrence in the following light. The cowardice of the body of Surgeons in the Metropolis has suffered the spirit of bigotry and idolatrous ignorance to pervade their profession, and to dictate where they shall cease to improve it; they have, with the exception of Mr. Lawrence, basely succumbed to the priestly juggle imposed upon them, and he finds it impossible to pursue the profession, on which he depends, without throwing a tub to and deceiving this Leviathan of Idolatry that menaces him. I am no more disposed to censure Mr. Lawrence than I am disposed to censure Galileo, particularly as the former never stepped out of the line of his profession to mingle with any public matters in politics or Idolatry. It would have been criminal in Galileo to have suffered himself to be sacrificed to the rage and bigotry of the Christian Inquisitors, and in the present day the conduct of the body of Surgeons in not supporting Mr. Lawrence can be alone viewed as criminal in this matter.

R. CARLILE.

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